DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 448 129 SP 039 642

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TITLE	Tutor Training for the American Reads Challenge: Omaha Public Schools.
INSTITUTION	Mid-Continent Regional Educational Lab., Aurora, CO.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	2000-10-00
NOTE	25p.
CONTRACT	RJ96006101
AVAILABLE FROM	Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning, 2550 South Parker Road, Suite 500, Aurora, CO 80014. Tel: 303-337-0900; Web site: http://www.mcrel.org.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Academic Achievement; Community Involvement; Elementary Education; Public Schools; *Reading Skills; *Tutoring; Volunteer Training; Volunteers
IDENTIFIERS	*America Reads Challenge; Omaha Public Schools NE

ABSTRACT

This report describes the 1999-2000 work of the Omaha Public School Tutoring Program, one recipient of a Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) grant to support the Department of Education's America Reads Challenge Initiative. McREL was charged with issuing and monitoring four subcontracts with tutoring partnerships to provide training for federal work-study tutors and community volunteers; delivering abstracts from each subcontracting tutoring partnership; documenting innovative promising and best practices in the four subcontract sites; and communicating regularly regarding project progress and status. At the conclusion of the project (April 1999), the Omaha Program requested an extension. Subsequently, it submitted interim and final reports. The primary goal of the Omaha Public School Tutoring Program was training tutors to offer more skill-focused educational experiences in which students could be meaningfully engaged in improving and maintaining basic reading skills. In 1999-2000, goals included training 120 volunteers and providing services to 200 students. Overall, 221 tutors received training. In addition to formal orientation and on-the-job training, 112 volunteers received additional training and mentoring. Two appendixes, which comprise the bulk of the publication, present information on the revised scope of work and a final report and addendum. (SM)

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TUTOR TRAINING FOR THE AMERICAN READS CHALLENGE

OMAHA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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TUTOR TRAINING FOR THE AMERICAN READS CHALLENGE

OMAHA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Submitted to

Office of Educational Research and Improvement
U.S. Department of Education

Submitted by

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October 2000

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INTRODUCTION

The fundamental purpose of the America Reads Challenge is to enable parents, community leaders, and educators to expand and enhance existing successful literacy programs that provide extended reading time and tutoring to assist children who need additional help to increase their reading skills and achievement levels. The majority of elementary school students receive engaging, research-based instruction in literacy and reading skills. However, despite the quality of classroom instruction, some youngsters require extra time and assistance to meet the high levels of reading skills needed in school, the workplace, and adulthood.

Research results show that tutoring fosters improvements in reading comprehension, word recognition, student's attitudes toward reading, and students' self-confidence as readers. Studies of tutoring programs report that successful tutor-tutee relationships are characterized by strong reinforcement of progress, a high number of reading and writing experiences in which students move from being fully supported to working independently, and explicit demonstration of appropriate reading and writing processes.

To meet the needs of America Reads sites in training tutors across the country to help children read well and independently by the end of third grade, the U.S. Department of Education contracted with the Regional Educational Laboratories to conduct tutor-training conferences, subcontract with tutoring partnerships, and provide technical assistance and research for these activities. The goal of the work was to train tutor trainers and coordinators effectively by providing them with the most recent information and research on promising and best practices in tutoring and give the trainers practical advice based on this research. An additional goal was to facilitate the direct training of federal work-study students and explore the promising and best practices that are employed by partnerships providing training to tutors across the country.

On April 15, 1998, the Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) – formerly Mid-continent Regional Educational Laboratory – began an effort to support the U.S. Department of Education's America Reads Challenge initiative. As noted above, the primary goal of the effort was to improve the training of tutors working in America Reads programs in the Central Region. To accomplish this goal, McREL was charged with, and accomplished the following, subtasks:

- attended a 1 ½ day briefing on the America Reads project;
- hosted a regional America Reads training conference;
- developed and distributed a Request for Proposal (RFP) for subcontracts from potential tutoring partnerships;
- issued and monitored four subcontracts with tutoring partnerships to provide training for federal work-study tutors and community volunteers;
- publicized the regional conference, a teleconference, and the solicitations of proposals;
- delivered abstracts from each subcontracting tutoring partnership;

- documented innovative promising and "best practices" in the four subcontract sites;
- communicated regularly with McREL' COTR as to the progress and status of the project.

At the conclusion of the project in April 1999, one award recipient, the Omaha Public Schools Tutoring Program, had not spent all of its grant and requested an extension from McREL. McREL granted a continuance in January 2000 after receiving an approved Scope of Work (see Appendix A) from the Omaha Public Schools. Subsequently, the project submitted two interim reports and a final report. An addendum to the final report was submitted at McREL's request (see Appendix B).

TUTOR TRAINING PROGRAM

The primary goal of the Omaha Public School Tutoring Program was to train tutors to offer more skill-focused educational experiences in which students can be meaningfully engaged in the process of improving and maintaining basic reading skills. In 1999-2000, the program's goal was to train a total of 120 volunteers including VISTA and AMERICORPS volunteers, federal work-study students, and community members. Tutors were required to meet the following criteria:

- an ability to read and write English proficiently;
- the ability to relate to students on an equal basis and build their confidence;
- a commitment to the project demonstrated by attending all the tutor pre- and inservice sessions;
- a commitment to volunteer two or more hours a week at a designated site;
- a desire to share these skills with pre-K-6 students in a non-threatening and non-patronizing way;
- a willingness to submit to and pass a District Background Check as it relates to interacting with children.

The program also set a goal to provide services to 200 students that would meet one or more of the following criteria:

- an elementary student in grades 1-3;
- a score below the 29th percentile on the California Achievement Test;
- receive tutorial assistance at one of the designated community sites within their school/neighborhood community or day care center;
- referral by an elementary interdisciplinary team;
- a recommendation from a teacher;
- a parental request for services; or
- a community agency referral.

At the completion of the program, a total of 221 tutors received 12 hours of training, as well as technical assistance and follow-up support. Tutors were trained to work with individual and small group activities that consisted of the following::

- anticipatory set;
- tutors modeling the behavior;
- tutors checking with the students for understanding;
- corrective activities and more individual work with the student; and
- extension activities that allowed the student to practice the newly-acquired skill.

Tutors were also trained to

- use two non-traditional assessments to measure reading ability upon entry to the tutorial site;
- document initial student needs and focus practice activities on unsuccessful areas;
- use the READ*WRITE*NOW lesson plan format t practice basic skills with students; and
- construct and implement games that practice fundamental reading skills.

In addition to the formal orientation and on-the-job training, 112 volunteers received additional training on mentoring; working with diverse students; reading, math and language arts skills; multiple intelligences; and how to be an effective tutor. See Appendix A for more information about the general tutor training and Appendix B for descriptions of the supplemental trainings.

CONCLUSION

As described above, the 1999-2000 Omaha Public School Tutoring Program exceeded their goals for the number of tutors trained and number of children serviced. In addition to nearly doubling the number of tutors trained and far exceeding the number of children served. Altogether, tutors provided over 53,000 hours of service and served over 1,461 students through one of the tutoring programs. Of those, 552 were served at 16 community sites; 62 K-6 students were tutored in school-based programs; 303 were kindergarten students; and 544 received assistance through the "First Book Program."

Over the two years of the tutor training program funded by the Tutor Training for the America Reads Challenge Community, School and federal work-study tutoring programs, over 400 tutors were trained to work with children attending the Omaha Public Schools. The Omaha Public School tutoring reports that the subcontract funds enabled them to train tutor volunteers on several Saturday mornings; provide volunteers with games, lesson plans, books and a variety of tutoring supplies; and promote the tutoring centers in the community.

APPENDIX A

REVISED SCOPE OF WORK

Student and Community Services
3215 Cuming Street
Omaha, NE 68131-2024
(402) 557-2131

II. TUTORING PROGRAM ABSTRACT

Community Services of Omaha Public Schools (OPS) seeks funding to improve the quality of Pre/In-Service Training provided to an existing tutoring program through community collaboration. Consequently, improved tutor training will allow tutors to offer more skilled educational experiences in which students can be meaningfully engaged in the process of practicing basic reading strategies.

HISTORICAL ORIGIN – *What was the tutoring program like before?*	In 1979, OPS Student and Community Services Department began a collaborative effort with area libraries and churches to offer tutoring at decentralized sites. This partnership sought to include the community in academic achievement for students. As the lead partner in this agreement, Community Services functioned in the following capacities: referred students, recruited, selected, screened, hired, trained and placed tutors, evaluated program effectiveness, and monitored student progress. In addition, OPS reported and maintained the following information: student contact time, individual and group contacts in each subject area and provided technical support for tutors and site coordinators. It was determined through program evaluation results that there is a need for more specific tutor training in the area of reading. To date, OPS has been chosen as the Nebraska site for **America Reads**, which further enhances the quality of resources we are able to provide at each site to promote literacy.
CONCEPT – *What are the goals of the program and what will it look like after funding?*	Community Services (CS) will offer more opportunities, tutoring sites and tutors for its students to receive reading assistance by implementing a uniform tutor training plan. **We will train a total of 120 volunteers comprised of:** ➢ VISTA, AMERICORPS Volunteers and WorkStudy students ➢ Teachers, Family Room staff & retired teachers who participate in school-based tutoring ➢ Community Agency Facilitators who provide tutoring at community centers ➢ Parents and daycare providers who deliver educational after-school programs ➢ Church organizations who offer tutoring services to their congregations **The goals of the program are:** ❑ Encourage parents, community agencies, and day care providers to serve as learning partners to promote literacy through intense Tutor Training ❑ Provide extended learning opportunities beyond the classroom ❑ Trained tutors will learn specific reading strategies that promote literacy and provide developmentally appropriate educational activities, which maintain and improve the reading skills of its participants. ❑ Demonstrate improved literacy of tutored students and language skills documented by a pre and post-test. ❑ Offer a parental component responsive to the needs of each site.
PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA - *Who can be served? How are they Selected?*	**200 students that will benefit from this tutoring program must fit one or more of the following criteria:** ❑ Elementary student in grades 1-3 ❑ Score below the 29th Percentile on the California Achievement Test ❑ Receive tutorial assistance at one of the designated community sites within their school/neighborhood community or day care center ❑ Referral by an elementary interdisciplinary team ❑ Recommendation from a teacher ❑ Parental request ❑ Community Agency referral **Selection criteria for those wishing to work as tutors in the field of literacy are:** ❑ An ability to read and write English proficiently (H.S. Diploma) ❑ The ability to relate to students on a equal basis and build their confidence ❑ A commitment to the project demonstrated by attending all tutor pre-and in-service sessions ❑ A commitment to volunteer two or more hours a week at a designated site ❑ A desire to share these skills with PreK-6th grade students in a non-threatening and non-patronizing way ❑ A willingness to submit to and pass a District Background Check as it relates to interacting with children

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DEMOGRAPHICS -

What kinds of information about OPS schools, families, students and communities that we serve indicate a need for tutorial services?

Community Services has designated the **California Achievement Test** and Schools' Percentages of Low-Scorers, **Lunch Program Participation** and the **1990 Census** to serve as variables supporting the need for assistance and defining the target group to be served. Categories are explained and results are detailed below.

California Achievement Test - A standardized achievement test that measures students' progress in reading, math and language. The school district administers the CAT each year to students in grades 2,3,4,6,8 and 10. Scores are expressed in percentiles. The numbers reflect each school's percentage of students who scored particularly low. The low scorers, are defined as those who scored below the 23rd percentile in the categories of reading comprehension, phonics, decoding, and language. These scores substantiate the need for fundamental skill assistance at schools.

Lunch Program Participation - The percentage of students from low-income families in each school is significant because it indicates the inability to pay for additional educational assistance in the event a child needs help in the mastery of fundamental skills necessary to be successful in a classroom.

Educational Attainment Within School Communities by ZIP Code - The information was obtained from the 1990 census data. The ZIP codes in which the targeted, urban schools are located and the number of adults 25 years or older who have attained education in grades 9-12 but did not receive a high school diploma are depicted in the chart below.

Data Reflecting Academic Need
And Description of the Communities Served

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	ZIPCODE	% OF CAT LOW SCORERS	% OF STUDENTS FREE & REDUCED LUNCH	# & % OF ADULTS 25+ WITHOUT H.S. DIPLOMA
Belvedere	68111	29%	90%	5,640 or 20%
Central Park	68111	33%	76%	5,640 or 20%
Franklin	68111	28%	75%	5,640 or 20%
Indian Hill	68107	31%	88%	5,817 or 25%
Miller Park	68111	33%	95%	5,640 or 20%
Mount View	68104	23%	72%	4,030 or 12%
Sherman	68110	61%	95%	2,204 or 26%
Saratoga	68111	19%	85%	5,640 or 20%
Skinner	68111	30%	74%	5,640 or 20%
Wakonda	68104	28%	85%	4,030 or 12%
Walnut Hill	68131	22%	89%	1,229 or 10%

SUMMARY:

- ❑ Of the 11 schools listed above that are targeted to receive tutorial services, six schools located in the 68111 ZIP code have nearly one third of their student population scoring in the lower percentiles on the California Achievement Test.
- ❑ All of the targeted schools have 70% or more of their student population receiving free or reduced lunch, thus, documenting socioeconomic need in low-income neighborhoods. They are representative of the demographics in the inner city urban area that the Omaha Public Schools serves.
- ❑ Of the five ZIP codes (68104, 68107, 68110, 68111 & 68131), three have 20% of the adults 25 years or older and who have not graduated from high school. The 1990 Census documents that almost one-third of its residents in each ZIP code are high school dropouts, which indicates a lack of educational attainment by parents and a need to **teach** parents **how** to help their children to practice basic reading skills to assist schools in promoting literacy.
- ❑ Parents without a high school diploma may incur difficulty finding the time to assist their children with homework because they may not know how or do not have the time. The scheduled hours parents work may not allow them the time to review their child's schoolwork. To make ends meet, parents may have to settle for entry level jobs without ideal hours that allow time for family interaction or parents may work two or more part-time jobs to equal one full-time job. Consequently, providing the basic necessities to their families becomes the priority, rather than having the time to actively participate in their child's education.

	In addition, the following *community sites that provide tutorial services to OPS students are in close proximity to the target schools (located in designated ZIP codes) are. The inclusion of daycare providers, school sites and parent groups will increase the likelihood of more students receiving assistance. **68104** - Clair Memorial United Methodist Church, Mt. Nebo Baptist Church, and the Wintergreen Park Apartments **68107** - Willa Cather Branch Library, Social Settlement, Omaha Baptist Church **68110** - Zion Baptist Church, St. John AME, Wesley House, St. Paul Church of Christ and God Trinity Lutheran **68111** - Miraculous Works Ministry for Christ, Salem Baptist Church Charles Washington Branch Library, Skinner Magnet Center, Sherman Community Center **68131** - Greater St. Paul Church of Christ and God Kid's Clubs - a before and after school program administered by the Schools Foundation for children attending Omaha Public Schools. The mission of Kid's Club is to provide high quality care for children in a Safe, nurturing environment. This grant will train facilitators at the following sites: Ashland Park/Robbins, Bancroft, Beals, Field Club, Marrs, Spring Lake, Kellom, Mount View and Springville Elementary Schools. * includes but is not limited to
PROCESS – *How does the program function?*	**Tutor Pre-Service & In-Service** – On-site technical support is provided on a monthly basis to: reinforce training and learning strategies used for the interventions (reading comprehension, phonics/reading, speech/language and recreational reading), evaluate program effectiveness, gain an understanding of the process educational games provided for participants, promote on-going support and assurance that students are provided with meaningful educational experiences. ***Tutor Training & Contact Hours*** 7 hrs of Tutor Training/Pre & In-service per Tutor X 120 Tutors = 840 hrs of technical assistance, in-service, documentation and follow-up support is provided. 4 Tutor hrs. per wk X 24 wks = 96 student contact hrs per year by each tutor 96 hours X 120 Tutors = 11,520 total student contact hrs made by tutors. Tutors will be placed at designated Community Sites, Day Care Centers and After-School Programs requesting assistance. A Needs Assessment is completed on each student to obtain a direction and purpose for being tutored. Services delivered are carried out according to the plan and are reviewed quarterly after each report card period. Success, mastery of skills, and areas of improvement are documented and interpreted to the participant and parents. ***Two Hours Of Tutorial Assistance Weekly Will Be Offered To Participants.*** This consists of two 35 min reading sessions per wk (with the remaining 25 min each session used to provide assistance with homework). 2 student hrs per week X 24 weeks = 48 total contact hrs received per student. ***Total Reading Contact Hours Individual & Small Group Per Student*** Two 35 min. sessions wkly = 70 min per wk x 24 weeks = 1,680 min or 28 hrs 200 tutored students X 28 hrs of reading skill practice = 5,600 total contact hrs Students are assisted and academically challenged through individual assistance or group activities on specific reading skills. In addition, students are shown how to take an active role in their learning and view the completion of schoolwork as one portion of academics, not as a means to an end.
STRUCTURE – *What are the program's parts?*	**TUTOR TRAINING COMPONENT** **It is critical that tutors, whether they are fourth graders or 40-year olds, be properly trained. Do not assume that because they are honor students or adults, that they are effective tutors. Without training, they will rely on personal experiences. While this may not be necessarily bad, it is possible that they could resort to damaging practices such as threats, put-downs or guilt (Guastad, 1992).** ***This project's approach is designed to provide uniform and regular assistance to Tutors in five categories:*** ❑ Effectiveness Strategies for Reading Helpers - Fundamentals of Tutoring Young Children in Literacy and Reading Development ❑ Literacy Issues - An Overview of How Child Development and Literacy Development Influence Children to become Readers and Writers ❑ Site Management - Sotto Voce; Influencing Behavior and Maintaining Control Through Positive Discipline ❑ Follow-Up/Support Activities - Diversity In The Learning Center: Multicultural Issues To Consider etc. ❑ Documentation/Evaluation - Individual Contact Hours By Race, Grade, Sex and Subjects

The tutorial format for each participant is as follows:

The first 25 minutes of reading assistance will consist of paired reading, review of story, checking for understanding of what was read (comprehension), vocabulary words from story, review of words from Dolche Reading List and a writing activity with feedback.

The remaining 35 minutes of the tutoring session will be devoted to assisting participants with homework completion. In the event that the participant has no work that needs to be completed, the participant will play reading skill games (in small groups or individually) to reinforce specific skills that have already been reviewed.

The participants under the supervision of a tutor will construct "Make and Take" games. The tutor then explains how the game is to be played and models the behavior with the participants. After the participants understand how to play the game, the tutor then becomes an observer, unobtrusive in behavior and intervening only as a resource.

Each student participating in the game will receive their own copy to" Take" home and "Make" with family members. Participants will show family members how to play the game and review what they are learning. Thus, family members are included in helping the participant practice basic reading skills.

IV. TUTOR TRAINING MODEL

Model instructional techniques you would like tutors to emulate, emphasizing interpersonal, management and content skills. After this, switch roles with them and give them a chance to practice these techniques with your supervision. (Rekrut, 1994; Topping 1988).

Historically, our Project Coordinator has recruited tutors from college campuses, volunteer organizations and service learning projects. Once recruited they have been in an all-day orientation consisting of responsibilities/expectations, marketing tutoring services, site management procedures, tips/strategies for tutors and learning styles. They are then placed at sites according to convenience and access to transportation. This alone may be enough to get a tutor started, but it does not specifically demonstrate to the tutor **how** (s)he should assist students. There was no component to explain how children learn and no adequate time within the orientation for tutors to model desirable behaviors and receive feedback from the supervisor and peers. In addition, little emphasis was placed on uniform approaches to practicing skills with students. Consequently, there has been very little consistency or focus for the tutor and the participant being tutored. Although sites were visited with regularity, much of the focus was on the completion of homework and not the maintenance and improvement of current skills. Technical support has been given for management and discipline tips as well as materials to use as ancillary activities. In short, many of the components of a good tutoring program were in place, but there appeared to be no overall cohesive purpose or goal other than to help participants finish work assigned from school.
Through the assistance of its collaborative partners and the National Resource Center, OPS Community Services seeks to refine the tutoring program and maximize the quality of service provided to its participants by:

Providing project goals *and demonstrating how tutor assistance impacts the outcomes of participant success through the use of Omaha Public Schools Learning Goals.*

Emphasizing reading skills maintenance and improvement *as the major purpose for tutoring and teaching tutors how children learn so that they can effectively identify areas where the participant needs help.*

Providing a "Needs" Assessment *(The Dolche Reading List) and using it as a baseline for improvement.; which in turn, gives focus to the goal of the tutoring, affords tutors a reference point for skill practice and develops an anticipatory set for planning lessons.*

Teaching and detailing a uniform lesson for tutors to follow *for each session and allowing tutors to practice/present this lesson format as a group and individually in order to receive feedback and become proficient in the delivery of information.*

Continuing to add and reinforce varied instructional reading activities *that can be used with participants by providing four mandatory follow-up support sessions. These sessions will teach tutors additional techniques of reinforcing skills, guide evaluation of gains students have made, and review tutor effectiveness relative to participant gains.*

In essence, tutors will be **educated** as to how students learn, **shown** where students need to be, **taught** how to measure where they are, **trained** to help them meet district learning goals and **measure** tutor effectiveness and student gains by skill improvement and maintenance.

TUTOR TRAINING ACTIVITIES

NATURE OF TRAINING	TRAINING TOPIC(S)	TRAINER(S)	HOURS	DATE
Pre-service	▪ 1st Steps for Reading Helpers-Fundamentals of Tutoring Young Children in Literacy & Reading Development ▪ An Overview of How Child Development and Literacy Development Influence Children To Become Readers OPS Reading Learner Goals - - ▪ The Dolche Reading List as an Assessment – ▪ How Do Assessment & Learner Goals Relate To Tutors & Effectiveness? Goals For Each Grade - - ▪ Lesson Plan Format- - Modeling Assessment Techniques/Feedback - - Presentation of a Lesson Plan/ Feedback—Diversity Issues	OPS Elementary Education Dept. & Tutoring Project Coord.	2	10/16/99
In-service Tutoring Strategies Pre – School & Kdg.	▪ Talking with Children - - Reading Aloud with Children ▪ Matching Games: Capital/Lower case letters - - numbers to number words - - ▪ recognition of colors - - matching colors to color words	Rdng Spec. Tutoring Project Coord.	2	10/29/99
In-service Tutoring Strategies - - Primary Grades 1st – 6th	Helping with Reading Strategies - - ▪ Focusing On Meaning - - Does the Assessment Justify the Assistance? Reviewing Dolche Results for Needs, Baseline Data & Lesson Plans ▪	Rding Spec. Tutoring Project Coord.	2	11/6/99
In-service	▪ "Make & Take Games" to Reinforce Skills ▪ Report Card Grades - - Dolch List Checkpoint Results Contacts: sex, race, grade, subject & skills - -	Rdng. Spec. Tutoring Project Coord.	2	11/20/99
In-service	▪ Lesson Plan Review - - Learner Goals ▪ Participant Gains & Tutor Effectiveness ▪ Sharing Best Practices & Contacts	Rdng. Spec. Tutoring Project Coord.	2	1/8/00
In-service	▪ Review Learner Goals Accomplished ▪ Participant Gains & Tutor Effectiveness - - ▪ Dolch Reading List Gains- Indiv. & Site Contact Hours	Rdng. Spec. Tutoring Project Coord.	2	3/5/99

V. Goals, Objectives, Milestones and Tasks

The Community Services Department will recruit, train, field and support 300 tutors from VISTA, AMERICORPS, WorkStudy, churches, day care facilities, schools & community agencies to assist Omaha Public School students at designated tutorial sites in their school community with the improvement and maintenance of fundamental reading skills

OBJECTIVES	MILESTONES	TASKS	EVALUATION CRITERIA
Tutors will be trained to use 2 non-standardized assessments to measure reading ability upon entry to the tutorial site.	*By October 29, 1999 120 tutors will have attended a mandatory 2-part pre-service prior to providing any tutorial services.*	Tutors will be trained to assess Student's reading skills that need practice by using the **Dolch Reading List**. During training, they will receive practice & feedback using these instruments.	❑ Attendance Sheets ❑ Session Evaluations Completed copies of **DRL's** used by tutors to practice **in** each student file located at each tutorial site
Tutors will be trained to document initial needs after assessment and focus practice activities on unsuccessful areas.	*By October 29, 1999 120 tutors will have attended a mandatory 2-part pre-service prior to providing any tutorial services.*	Tutors will be trained to uniformly document each Student's reading skills that need practice and prepare activities that relate to specific skill improvement as indicated by assessments given. Tutors in training will be presented with situational problems that they must solve and role-play.	❑ Attendance Sheets ❑ Session Evaluations ❑ Completed copies of **DRL's and lesson plans** used by tutors to practice ❑ **Completed DRL's & lesson plans** each student file located at each tutorial site
Tutors will be trained to use the READ*WRITE*NOW lesson plan format to practice basic skills with students.	*By October 29, 1999 120 tutors will have attended a mandatory 2-part pre-service prior to providing any tutorial services.*	Tutors will work cooperatively to generate a lesson plan and present the lesson to the other trainees. The supervisor and participants will provide feedback to the group as it relates to the effectiveness of the lesson.	❑ Attendance Sheets ❑ Session Evaluations ❑ Completed copies of **lesson plans** used by tutors to practice ❑ **Completed lesson plans** each student file located at each tutorial site
Tutors will be trained in the construction and implementation of games that practice fundamental reading skills.	*By October 29, 1998 300 tutors will have attended a mandatory 2-part in-service*	Tutors (in-groups) will learn about specific strategies and skill games. After they have an understanding of how the game works and what it helps to reinforce, tutor groups will present games to their peers and teach each other how to play and explain the strategies used.	❑ Attendance Sheets ❑ Session Evaluations ❑ Completed **reading skill games** supplied in each tutor kit and located at each tutorial site
Tutors will attend 14 hours of pre and in-service from September through March in order to receive a $100.00 stipend for their initiative to learn how to help children read and their motivation to provide tutorial services to students	*By March 8, 2000 120 tutors will have completed 12 hours of mandatory pre and in-service which provides them with adequate skills to assist students with the maintenance and improvement of reading skills*	The Project Coordinator will meet with tutors at their designated sites from November through March to review lessons and documentation, monitor student progress, tutor effectiveness and provide resources and support.	❑ Attendance sheets ❑ Tutor lesson plans ❑ Completed assessments ❑ Checkpoints monitoring of student success ❑ Self-reporting survey of tutor effectiveness ❑ Program evaluations

VI. MONITORING & EVALUATION

The monitoring and evaluation plan of the Community Services Tutorial Project will allow for a formative on-going evaluation of current project activities. Bi-monthly monitoring will focus on three broad areas:

(1) The progress of the project in achieving the funded objectives

(2) The effectiveness of the project in meeting the purpose of America Reads Program

(3) The effect of the program on persons being served (both tutors and students), including any person who are members of groups that have been traditionally underrepresented

MONITORING & EVALUATION Cont'd

Data will be collected throughout the year in a computerized database system, which substantiates the Final Performance Report submitted to the Mid-Continent Regional Educational Laboratory. Data collected will include participant eligibility status, statistics, demographics, and a summary of services provided, and overall progresses toward program objectives.

The critical reports and tools used to conduct the evaluation process will include:

- **Tutored participants grade reports, Benchmark & California Achievement Test Scores**
  (Generated at the end of each quarter from the Omaha Public Schools mainframe database)

- **Initial tutorial site reading assessments for each student**
  (Generated at each site and housed in individual folders –to be used as reference points in lesson planning)

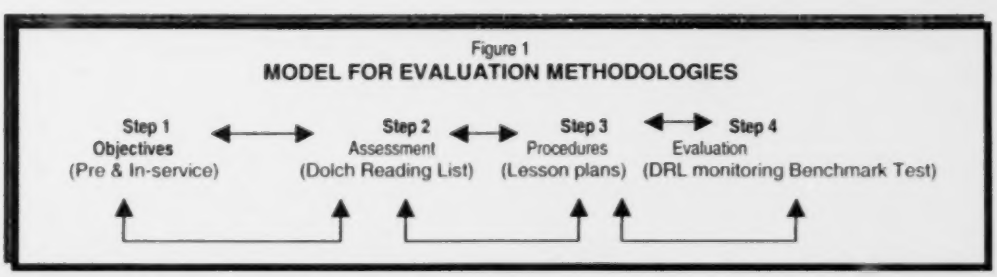
- **Participant Roster**
  (Generated and maintained to identify age, location, grade, sex, ethnicity, individual contact hours by person, skill and subjects)

- **Bi-monthly activity reports of budget activity, expenditures and encumbrances**
  (Generated by OPS accounting department to ensure fiscal responsibility)

- **Individual and small group lesson plans**
  (Generated daily, reported weekly, collected in a binder and entered into a database to run a monthly report of skills practiced, maintained and improved)

The evaluation methodologies utilized by Community Services provide a basis to help decide on the needed changes and modifications in services to help the Tutor determine if (s)he has been successful in helping students maintain or improve their reading skills. Figure 1 provides a visual of the evaluation model that Community Services uses to provide a logical pattern of action for providing effective services and evaluating those services.

Figure 1
MODEL FOR EVALUATION METHODOLOGIES



The figure above indicates there is a continual evaluation process for each step of evaluating the effectiveness of progress in meeting tutorial objectives.

In step 1, the objectives are an outgrowth of the purposes of the tutorial program, in addition to the needs of the tutors and students. These objectives specify the types of accomplishments that tutors will have to achieve to indicate they have actually acquired the knowledge, information, and/or skills. In addition they specify the accomplishments the project will have to achieve to indicate it has been successful in providing services to its participants.

Step 2 can be thought of as assessment of knowledge and/or skills the students have when they enter a tutorial site; or as an assessment of the baseline services the Tutorial Program provides. This assessment step enables tutors to determine how many basic reading skills have been mastered prior to entry, and whether or not the student possesses the prerequisite skills to benefit from tutoring. The information derived from assessment will be used to evaluate the appropriateness of the original objectives in terms of the student's knowledge or skills. It will also facilitate more efficient allocation of resources for tutorial services. Students who have already mastered some skills can more profitably spend their time mastering other skills. The tutor can most efficiently spend his or her time with students demonstrating the greatest need for individual assistance, thus maximizing the learning experience.

Step 3 is an outgrowth of the stated objectives and learning needs of the students. Procedures are developed to maximize the attainment of skills, and are modified as necessary.

Step 4, evaluation is a continuous process carried on throughout the entire project. Based on the results of the evaluative information, feedback is provided about other components that may influence additions, eliminations, and modifications in all three other components. In other words, evaluation will help determine if the procedures, services and activities have been successful in achieving the goal. By analyzing objectives that have been achieved, and the student who achieved them, helps forms a realistic picture of what the students can expect to achieve in a given situation. The major function of evaluation used by Community Services will be to provide information to improve project effectiveness.

he results of formative evaluation will be discussed at in-services, and note will be made of any objectives or activities that need to be changed, eliminated, or improved. Appropriate tutor assignments and steps will be made to create the changes deemed necessary as a result of these reports.

The results of the previous year's evaluation are aggregated on subsequent pages.

Student and Community Services asked Tutor Coordinators to help the America Reads Project do a better job of meeting our student's needs (through tutoring) by completing this questionnaire. The purpose of the questionnaire was to let the project know how Tutor Coordinators and site personnel feel about the training and its procedures.

The questions and results for the twenty-three tutor-coordinators are as follows:

(Circle one) How well is the Student and Community Services Tutoring Program doing in:

Grade each item:

1 = Excellent quality
2 = Good quality
3 = Fair quality
4 = Poor quality
5 = Don't know

1	2	3	4	5	
(39%)	(39%)	(17%)	(0%)	(4%)	Working cooperatively between schools, community, and parents?

A majority of participants feel that the quality of cooperation between schools, community and parents through the America Reads project is good.

1	2	3	4	5	
(57%)	(35%)	(4%)	(0%)	(4%)	Giving individual attention to students in grades 1-6 to assist with basic reading skills

A large percentage of Tutor Coordinators rated the ability to give individual attention at their sites as excellent.

1	2	3	4	5	
(61%)	(35%)	(4%)	(0%)	(0%)	Motivating students to want to read

A majority of Tutor Coordinators felt that their ability to motivate students at their sites through the America Reads project were excellent to good.

1	2	3	4	5	
(73%)	(23%)	(4%)	(0%)	(0%)	Providing quality tutorial resources to tutors

Tutor Coordinators felt that the resources provided at in-services by the America Reads project were excellent to good.

1	2	3	4	5	
(65%)	(17%)	(13%)	(0%)	(0%)	Offering worthwhile in-services to provide strategies to assist tutors

The majority of Tutor Coordinators felt that the America Reads Project in-services provided excellent strategies to assist tutors.

1	2	3	4	5	
(56%)	(36%)	(4%)	(0%)	(4%)	Providing speakers responsive to topics relevant to tutors

Tutor Coordinators rated the ability of the America Reads project to provide in-service topics responsive to tutor's needs as excellent to good.

1	2	3	4	5	
(23%)	(41%)	(22%)	(0%)	(14%)	Offering technical services to better manage a tutoring site

The majority of the Tutor Coordinators felt the America Reads project's technical services were excellent to fair at each site. The fact that there are a significant percentage of sites that do not know about technical services alert the project to review the quality and types of technical assistance we offer.

The monitoring, implementation and follow up of the services that are provided on a regular basis is as equally as important as the training.

Anecdotal Remarks from the Following Questions:

Please list any examples of student improvement you have experienced at your site (report cards, better oral proficiency, homework submitted to school on a timely basis, etc.)

- "We have seen an improvement in report cards and some students attitudes towards learning."
- "Reports cards and oral proficiency"
- "I feel that social skills in peers have improved, the motivation to read and learn new skills is constantly improving. Reading is continuing to happen in kids that hated reading."
- "Improvement in spelling tests, an overall excitement to be there and engaged. I have experienced a bonding with the students and really look forward to being there each week."
- "Attendance and bringing homework each time they come."
- Better oral proficiency"
- "I've noticed that students are more excited about what they are learning and working together on the subject material makes the process of learning more fun."
- "More enjoyment of reading time...My 5th grade student was a bit reluctant when we began reading together. Now she is punctual and shouts out when she sees me in the hall. She has begun bringing the books she'd like us to read together."
- "Some students have gained confidence to try harder in the classroom. I was told the other day of one of the students who is seeing her test scores in more than one subject increasing tremendously."
- Asking to take a book they started with us home to finish, asking to bring other schoolwork to us so they can get help, asking for the site to be open every night and saying "okay, I'm reading for the test."
- We've seen an improvement in student behavior at school. We discuss problems identified on the report card or by a teacher."
- Teachers have commented on the improvement of oral proficiency and homework submitted on a timely basis."
- "I have some elementary students who upon entering the site were having some problems with word recognition who have improved by 50% and their grades reflect the improvement."
- "I challenged students to get at least one "O" (outstanding) on each quarter report card. One of my five 1st grade students (All African-American males) received three "O's"."
- "The checklists to the teachers are great because it connects the tutor, teacher and parent in a partnership which can be a lasting relationship throughout the year and a way involved stays abreast of the child's standing."
- "One of my students had made great improvements in her expressive language. Just a few days ago her teacher thanked me for helping her and we discussed that she seemed to open up and had completely different personality."
- "Students had a very positive attitude about tutoring. I could tell they appreciated the extra attention and support and I was happy to provide a safe place for students to go after school."
- "Students want to read and are seeing themselves as writers and student trust has grown in the tutors – which makes them more willing students more willing to work on deficiencies."

Does this type of training for tutors need to continue and why?

- "Yes, because many of the tutors are new to their role in the educational setting. They need knowledge of the Learning Goals and the goals they are striving for with each student."
- "Yes, to be there for the students who do not get the required assistance at home or through other resources."
- "The training was a valuable way to get the kids 'hyped' to reading. The approaches provided, gave us a variety of techniques to motivate who by project's end were becoming self-motivated."
- "The support and ideas that are exchanged are critical to avoid being overwhelmed."
- "Students need tutors who know what to do and how to work with them."
- "Yes, the training should continue because I get ideas on how to improve my work with students through the networking with other tutors."
- "YES! The materials and information that is distributed is invaluable in giving tutors direction to help and reach students. I have used the knowledge from these workshops to stimulate interest and excitement with

Please list any improvements that the training project can use to better serve the tutors it trains.

- "Enlist the help of Reading Services for diagnostic training and corrections based on diagnostics."
- "Have tutors share their strategies with parents."
- "More supplies and materials"
- "Some sites need more tutors because they have more children. Shift the tutors to sites where they have a steady flow of students.
- "The speakers on self-esteem and multi-cultural activities to use at sites were great."
- "It would be helpful to provide the tutors with a quiet corner to work in, although I realize that this sometimes is beyond your control. I would appreciate the steady communication with my coordinator. Susan Aden is on top of what is happening and very helpful."
- "I think if we are given certain activities to take to our sites, it is very helpful to brainstorm with one another as to various uses for specific items."
- "Maybe examples in writing of how different sites are run (for ideas). Circulate a list of people who could or would like to speak to students (i.e., firemen, policeman, etc.)."
- "More computer programs."
- "Unlike other sites, we are fortunate that most computers, materials, and facilities are well provided for. I feel we can always use more tutors for one-on-one contact."
- More information on the management of sites."
- Parents need to be brought into the process when the tutoring site and program is being developed. Parents should be required to help with either paperwork or need to attend at least one tutoring session a month to keep their children in the program."

- "Parents would do well to tutor at the sites with their own children and teaching them. It's a good experience for both parent and child."
- "I think that the training has been great and very in tune with what the tutors need."
- "Extra training will only make a better program. I feel the students will benefit from my training. I would like more training on discipline and conflict management."
- "Varied learning activities to motivate students to want to read and write."

List any "Best Practices" used at your tutoring site that were successful with students.

- "The one-on-one help that is exactly for students seeking assistance is exactly the things that the kids may need."
- "Parental input – #1. We are going to require parents to stay and observe so as to follow up at home. #2. Implement Parent-Awareness Workshops."
- "Copy cat system, using dry-erase boards for games and activities."
- "I have set up centers and had the kids rotate through them to maximize their time."
- "Rewards for bringing in report cards – words of the week – group reading – group book reports – group oral presentations"
- "Snacks every now and then. I have them talk to me about any fun they had after a holiday, etc."
- "Getting students involved with reading or math games helped foster a cooperative learning atmosphere. The students enjoy working together more so than working alone."
- "Information – photocopied games from these inservices have been extremely useful to incorporate our reading activity with other content areas in the curriculum. For example, The Time Bingo Game from the February inservice was great to play after reading books such as "Telling Time with Mama Cat". This combined reading with what students were doing in math.
- "Visual materials – kids love these – they learn to recognize sight words.
- "The games – our students are not only reading (and they don't know it) but learning to take turns, concentrate on listening and having fun. I even have students wanting to do the activities in class the next day."
- " A folder for each student with age appropriate words, electronic games like Geosafari, each primary student reads aloud to their tutor, each registered student's parent signs a release of information in order for the site to monitor grades."
- "Reading club and rewards"
- "We are fortunate that we have certified teachers coordinating our tutoring sites. They break up into smaller groups based on need and similarities and begin helping students."
- "Consistency, patience, rewards, certificates of improvement and constant positive feedback."
- "Word family puzzles and phonics that students make and take home."
- "I began my sessions with 5 boys on the 2nd level of the church. I allow them to help each other (cooperative learning model). Then work in teams. As they read aloud and reviewed material, it got so loud that my class had to be moved to the Fellowship Hall in the basement. This was not a problem – learning is supposed to be exciting for the children. I don't care if they put us in a garage – it's worth it to allow the children to grow and achieve."
- "One evening I told my students to read their parents a bedtime story – instead of their parents reading to them. I sat in my chair; they tucked my coat around me and began to read to me. Whey they came to the next session, they couldn't wait to tell me what their parents said when they asked, "let me read to you."
- "Read stores and retell them in their own words."
- "Consistency with the same students each week; allowing the to feel the initial fear, the intermediate lethargy, and the lasting faith that is developed in confidence to read and work out problems that seemed impossible at the beginning."
- The games like Color Word, Vowel Sounds and Math Rocket. The children are very excited about doing them."
- Letter stamping, computer programs (many of the students do not have an opportunity to use the computer at school and have NO ACCESS to computers at home), story writing where they can illustrate their stories on a computer or with markers."

Budget & Cost Effectiveness

The Budget is Adequate and Reasonable: The total budget request of $29,764.00 is both adequate and reasonable. These costs include:

- **A Trainer Cadre** - consisting of seven or more elementary reading specialists, diversity and learning styles presenters. Trainers will be paid $16.75 per hour X of training.

  12 hours of pre-inservice = $1,671.60
  @ 19.68% fringes = $329.00
  TOTAL TRAINING COSTS - $2,000.00

- The costs also include postage and materials to be included in the **"Roving Tutor"** Kit (Tutor manuals, in-service binders, contact sheets lesson plans, reading games, manipulatives, DRL, monitoring/documentation sheets.

  $15,000 per one "Roving Tutor" Kits X 120 tutors = $18,000

Type of Position	#PS	Time %	Months	In-Kind Cost	Direct Costs
PERSONNEL					
Training Coordinator	1	15%	7	$5,000	
Trainers	10	5%	1		$2,000.00
Printing & Publication and Lamination Costs of Lesson Plans, Assessments, Reading Skill Practice Activities					$18,000.00
Room Rental for Training Sessions				$1,200	
Postage/Mailing Tutor information					$880.15
Phonemic Awareness Word Analysis/Recognition Software @ computer ready sites					$8,881.00
TOTALS				$6,200	$29,761.15

APPENDIX B

FINAL REPORT AND ADDENDUM

To: McREL
From: Mary Jean Holcomb, Omaha Public Schools
Date: June 26, 2000
RE: Year-End Report

During the 1999-2000 school year, the Omaha Public Schools established 16 after school tutoring sites. I am enclosing the data that were collected to evaluate the success of the tutoring sites.

1. **Volunteer Hours and Training**
   A list of volunteer tutors for the period ending May 15, 200 is attached. A total of 221 volunteers were involved in the tutoring program. All volunteers received a formal orientation and on-the-job training. Some of the volunteers have also taken advantage of one or more of the formal training sessions. The data indicates that 132 volunteers have been trained in a specific skill area. The volunteers have accounted for approximately 53,794 hours of service.
   Training Sessions included:
   - Information on mentoring
   - Reading, Math, and Language Arts skills
   - Teaching ESL students
   - Multiple Intelligences
   - How to be a good tutor

2. **Total Students Served at Tutoring Sites**
   Sixteen tutoring sites have been established to serve children and families in the Omaha Public Schools. Data indicates that 552 students were served at these community sites. See attached table.

3. **Students Served in School Based Tutoring Programs**
   A total of 62 students in grades K-6 have been tutored in 6 school based programs. Data for four school based programs was not submitted. See attached table.

4. **Students Served in the "I Like ME" Book Program**
   A total of 303 kindergarten students have received help with reading through the "I Like ME" book program. Volunteer tutors have read aloud the "I Like ME" books with the children at the 5 participating schools. See attached table.

5. **Students Served in the First Book Program**
   A total of 544 students have received help with reading through First Book. Volunteer tutors have distributed books to the children at these sites. Volunteers at these sites have encouraged, and in some cases, helped children read the books that they received. See attached table.

6. **Total Students Served in ALL Tutoring Programs**
   A total of 1,461 students in grades K-12 have been served through one of the tutoring programs. See attached table.

7. **Assessment of Reading and Math**
   A compilation of the percentages and numbers of students who increased their grades in Reading and Math is indicated in the last section of tables. A total of 437 student grades were evaluated. The data that was collected indicated that 168 students (38.4%) increased their grades in Math, and 185 students (42.3%) increased their grades in Reading. See attached tables.

8. **Family Night**
   A Family Night was held at Druid Hill Academy School. The theme for the evening was "Ready * Set * Read". Newsletters were distributed to the parents and families of the students attending the family night. Approximately 100 families were represented. The families received a newsletter that contained reading activities. Each child also received a free book that was donated by Scholastic Books. The families also received information on how to receive a free book from Barnes & Noble. Representatives from two branch libraries were also present to sign-up children for a library card and for the Summer Reading Program. See copy of attached newsletter.

9. **Family Fair**
   A Family Fair was held at Sherman Community Center. This Family Fair was a joint effort conducted with Sherman Academy School and the local community center. The theme for the evening was how to involve your child in various summer activities. Booths were set up and representatives from several organizations were present. These organizations included: Boys & Girls Club, Washington and Florence Branch library, Camp Fire, HANDS, VISTA Volunteers, Miller Park Pool, Barnes & Noble, Army Recruitment, Boy Scouts, and Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging. Representatives at the tutoring site distributed free books and activities to the families and children. A free meal was also served to the children and families.

Update of Year End Report
Omaha Public Schools
Department of Student and Community Services
Omaha, Nebraska

Tutor Training

Mentor Training:

During this training session, each volunteer received a booklet with information on how to be an effective mentor. We discussed what mentors do, tips on how to be a good mentor, benefits to mentees, and how to help young people make decisions. We also spent some time discussing how to be an effective communicator and mentor. Much of the session focused on activities that the volunteers could do with the children in order to establish a good, working relationship with the child. Student interest surveys were distributed and we discussed how best to utilize the survey and conduct the interview.

Multicultural Training:

Each volunteer received booklets and materials on how to relate to children from a variety of cultural backgrounds. Information on how to develop multicultural lessons and activities was distributed to each volunteer. Time was also spent on an awareness of multiple intelligences and volunteers were encouraged to develop activities to help children learn through the utilization of the multiple intelligences theory. Because some of our volunteers were high school students working with Latino students, we distributed books and activities to these volunteers that focused on the Latino culture. One tutoring site worked with a large number of Native American students, therefore, the volunteers were given more information on the Native American culture.

Reading Training:

Several training sessions focused on developing reading skills. Each volunteer was given a packet of approximately 30 games that they could use to help students develop skills in reading. Time was also spent on how to adapt teaching techniques to meet the needs of individual students. Volunteers were given booklets of reading and writing activities that could be used with students in grades K-6. Each volunteer also received a book entitled Read For Joy. We utilized this book to assist us with teaching volunteers how to help children read. The main objectives for the reading training was to provide a literature-rich learning environment for children, to help children develop phonemic awareness, and to encourage volunteers to read aloud to children everyday.

Language Arts Training:

Tutors were given training on how to use scrabble tiles and magnetic letters for spelling word practice. Word games were distributed to each tutor (Grow-A-Word, Word Links). Flash cards were given to each volunteer as well as materials that they could use to help children create their own books. Training on semantic mapping, subject and predicate development, alliterations, and how to act out and illustrate words was offered to volunteer tutors.

Math Training:

Math games were distributed to volunteers. The volunteers were encouraged to practice basic math skills via games, dominoes, cards, etc.

Volunteers were trained on how to use counters with children and visualize the number process. Dice were given to all volunteers and they were trained how to use the dice to help children improve their math skills. Volunteers were shown how they could integrate math, reading, and language arts skills into the tutor sessions.